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THE UNITARIAN

A MAGAZINE FOR FREE CHRISTIANS

STALWART UNITARIANS

KENNETH M. STREET

G.A. President-Elect, 1961

Mr. Street is a son of the late Rev. Sydney H. Street, minister of, for example, Renshaw Street, Manchester, Garston, Liverpool and Great Hucklow-Bradwell-Flagg. An uncle and both grandfathers were also Unitarian ministers.

A member of the Glasgow Church, Mr. Street has been secretary of the Scottish Unitarian Association for more than thirty years. He is a lay preacher of long standing, the father of five children, mostly married, a grandfather several times over; a large but very gentle man, wonderful with children. As devoted a lay Unitarian as could be found anywhere.

Mrs. Street is a stalwart in her own right, being on the committee of the Glasgow Church, an active figure in the Women's League and a member of its Central Committee.

Mr. and Mrs. Street live at Lenzie, a town outside Glasgow. It takes them about an hour to get to Church by bus and on foot.

Mr. Street retired in 1960 after thirty-four years service with the M. and C. Switchgear Company, during which time he rose to the post of Chief Draughtsman. During his years with the company he saw it grow from a department of the parent company to an organisation employing 500 persons. On his retirement the Apprentices' Magazine said "Mr. Street's contribution to the development of the firm has been considerable."

A Fellow of the Association of Mining, Electrical and Mechanical Engineers, an Associate of the Institution of Electrical Engineers, Mr. Street also has the Military Medal for service at Arras in World War I.

Stalwart Unitarians are like Old Soldiers. On top of an extremely active and full life Mr. Street has agreed to become President of the General Assembly in 1962.

HELP

Please do not send details of change of address, number of magazines required, and so on, to the Nuneaton printers of the magazine. When these changes are notified sporadically and at odd times of the month they cause unnecessary confusion and extra work.

Please help by sending such details direct to the magazine Manager:

Mr. George Harrison,
2, Walwyn Close,
Stretford, Manchester

HELPING HUCKLOW

The 116th Annual Meeting of the Northern Sunday School Federation was held at Ullet Road on Good Friday. During the business meeting Mr. A. Hibbert (above) became President of the Federation for 1961-2.

A large congregation joined the traditional Ullet Road Good Friday Service conducted by the minister, the Rev. Basil Short, with readings by the Chairman of the Holiday Homes Management Committee, the Rev. Eric Wild.

The business meeting that followed lunch concerned itself mainly with the Holiday Homes at Great Hucklow. It was noted that while income from bookings had increased by £1,000 there was still a deficit on the year's working of £697. Repairs and renewals, including new beds and bedding, were £665. The homes are now left only with investments worth £1,206. If the present state of affairs continues this will have gone in less than two years.

The Warden of the homes, Mr. Henry Tittle, says in his report to the Homes Management Committee: "The homes at Great Hucklow are a priceless asset to our denomination as a whole—if we lose them we shall realise it too late and be unable to replace them."

Elsewhere in the report Mr. Tittle vacuum cleaner yet." (Mr. Tittle vacum cleaner yet." (Mr. Tittle appealed for someone's "cast-off" at the 1960 A.G.M.) How about it, some reader of the "Unitarian"?

The Rev. Eric Wild said that the Homes Management Committee intended to raise an extra £1,000 per annum over and above the present income. This at least had to be done for a number of years before the homes would be out of deep water.

At the meeting a presentation was made to the retiring secretary, the Rev. Sydney Knight. The new secretary is Mr. Alan Curren.

The evening meeting heard a lively address from the Rev. Richard Kimball.

LONDON TRIUMPHS IN THE U.Y.P.L. DRAMA FESTIVAL

The fifteenth Annual U.Y.P.L. Drama Festival was held at Liverpool on Saturday, March 18th, and Saturday, March 25th.

The winner was Croydon Branch, making their first apperance in the Festival. Their play was "Fumed Oak" by Noel Coward. The choice of play was not highly praised but the trophy was won by the excellent acting of Brian Farley, Joan Spokes, Marjorie Farley and Mary Drake, under the production of Mrs. Mary Cox.

The 82 points gained by Croydon gave them a three-point lead over the other London entry, A. A.

Milne's "The Ugly Duckling." This play was beautifully presented by the Golder's Green Branch.

The order in which other branches finished was: Swansea (75), Liverpool (74), Altrincham (73), Swinton and Edinburgh (72), Stand and Stalybridge (66) and Chesterfield (65).

The adjudicator was Mr. R. G. Curry and the trophy was presented by Mr. Geoffrey Waywell. Hard-working secretary for the Festival was Mr. Bob Vickers and hosts Mill Street Mission. To Mr. Vickers and the Mission the U.Y.P.L. President, Miss Caroline Bell, gave special thanks for the great success of the Festival.

"ALL THINGS NEW!"

By J. Martin Hall

How vivid in the New Translation of the Bible, to the lawyer's recital of the two commandments about loving God with all one's heart, soul, strength and mind, and about loving one's neighbour as oneself, comes the reply of Jesus:

"That is the right answer; do that and you will live" (Luke 10 : 28). How vivid, too, a few lines later, when the splendid story about the Samaritan has been told, come the words of Jesus again:

"Go and do as he did" (Luke 10 : 37).

When these words are heard in church with proper emphasis observed, people are going to feel the power of the teaching more sharply than in the more familiar "Thou hast answered right: this do and thou shalt live," in the first case, and "Go and do thou likewise," in the second.

The truths are wonderful but through familiarity we can miss that wonder; timeless and yet, through custom and use, their edge can be dulled by time.

If only we could see things as they really are. If only we could recover sometimes the vision of the child!

"If only I could recover," says Sir Herbert Read, the poet, speaking of his childhood, "the sense and certainty of those innocent years, years in which we seemed not so much to live as to be lived by forces outside us, by the wind and trees and moving clouds . . then I am convinced that I shall possess a key to much that has happened to me in this other world of conscious living."

One of Spring's great glories is that it makes us more observant than we often are. No longer do we seem to take it quite so much for granted that, in an omnibus resolution in the heavenly places, it has been moved that the seasons should be voted in again en bloc for another 12 months. We see things with newer eyes. We hear things with sharper ears. We feel and become alive. Spring is the New Translation of the Book of God. In this edition we are shocked by sheer loveliness into seeing what was already there. The version may have been done better in the past:

"Behold the fowls of the air, for they sow not . . ." (Matt. 6 : 26).

But "Look at the birds of the air: they do not sow and reap and store in barns . . ." The scene is sharp and clear!

Our eyes are opened and our ears, and we see, because it is Spring-time and it is May-time, that it is an incredibly beautiful world!

CHILDREN'S CORNER

Raymond and the N.E.B.

"Uncle George, what's all this about a new Bible?"

"It's not a new **Bible**, Raymond; its a new translation."

"How d'you mean?"

"Well, the Bible was written originally in the Greek language of nearly two thousand years ago; or, rather, the New Testament was. It's a new version of the New Testament that we've got. We shall get a new one of the Old Testament later on. Now, the Authorised Version, which we generally use, was

translated from the original Greek into the language of 1611, so the new volume is translated into the language of 1961."

"I see."

"What do you see, Raymond?"

"I see that it should be easier to understand. The other isn't always so."

"Exactly. It was written in the language of its time to be understood by the people of its time!"

"And this is similar?"

"Yes, Raymond, but a lot of people won't like it."

"Why not, Uncle George?"

"We are used to the old phrases. A lot of passages are very familiar and many are rightly cherished. A great many biblical quotations have passed into everyday speech: they are used without realisation. There's a new version of the Lord's Prayer that has already aroused considerable criticism; the Beatitudes read differently; and, in due course, there will be new versions of Psalm 23, the Ten Commandments, and so on."

"Will it take the place of the Authorised Version, Uncle George?"

"It's not easy to say at the moment. I imagine it's expected to. A great deal of time and labour has gone into it. But whether people will want it to supersede the Authorised Version is a question for the future. Perhaps they will be used together. The main point at the moment is that it makes the New Testament easier to understand; and that will make a lot of difference to the man and woman in the pew. In any case, there's the tired old saying about time marching on. The Authorised Version will always be with us, of course, but there must always be a version of the Bible which is understandable to every age."

THE INTELLIGENT DEBT-COLLECTOR

By Francis Terry

The Pharisees were genuinely pious and well-meaning; but they suffered from an error which is very common among earnest, conscientious people: they thought that a good life consisted mainly in doing what you are told. They therefore studied and interpreted the scriptures with a view to obtaining as many detailed instructions as possible, so that everything they did might be an act of obedience to the divine Law. But obedience is not the whole of what man is made for, and therefore their hearts were often dissatisfied. They then sometimes made the further error of thinking that what was lacking in their lives could be made up for by increased concern for the lives of others: they must busy themselves raising the moral standard. So they went about impressing upon everybody the need to observe more rules than ordinary men were likely to keep. The result was that people were weighed down by a bad conscience and a sense of moral hopelessness. That is what Jesus meant when he said that the Pharisees put heavy burdens on men's shoulders.

This was illustrated by a story current among the early disciples, which they ascribed to Jesus (Luke XVI, 1-8). A business man had a representative to visit his customers and obtain payment. He, however, had been feathering his own nest; so this was brought to the knowledge of his principal, who terminated his employment and called on him to settle his account. Things had gone too far for this to be possible, so the agent suddenly changed his tactics. He hurried round to all the customers; but, instead of demanding payment, he reduced the quantities in their invoices, and so let them off part of their liability. In this way he ensured that there would at least be

some people who would always stand him a meal. When the business man learnt of the trick he praised the man's cleverness. Certainly he was more sensible in his own sphere, than some religious people are in theirs.

A lot of people go about as if they were God's debt-collectors. But that is not a sensible attitude to take up if one is oneself hopelessly insolvent—as we all are before God: a debt-collector's interest does not lie in strict collection of debts but in making common cause with his fellow-debtors to secure a reduction. When men's consciences trouble them, it is foolish to try to get rid of the trouble by increasing the burden on other men's consciences: if, on the contrary, they would ease men's consciences by lightening God's demands, they may be surprised to find that God approves their change of attitude.

This natural meaning of the story is somewhat obscured by the verses which follow (9-13). They seem to suggest some other interpretation, though it is hard to say quite what this is, as they do not fit together and add up. In fact they seem to be just a collection of unconnected sayings, dealing with topics mentioned in the story (property, trustworthiness, employment) and therefore placed after it for convenience of reference—a method often used in compiling the Gospels.

So the story should be left to convey its own lesson.

MINISTERIAL OVERSIGHT FOR ALL MANCHESTER CHURCHES?

At present there are seven ministers and sixteen churches in the Manchester area.

For several months the M.D.A. has been considering the problem of pastoral oversight for those churches without ministers.

The first scheme suggested was to appoint two District Ministers to minister to these churches, but it was found that this would entail an expense of £2000 p.a., approximately £500 more than the Manchester District Association and the unmanned churches could afford.

The scheme now under consideration suggests the linking of Altrincham and Urmston, Cross Street and Platt, Monton and Swinton, Dob Lane and Renshaw Street, Oldham and Blackley, Gorton and Pendleton, Chorlton and Wythenshawe, and Hale and Sale.

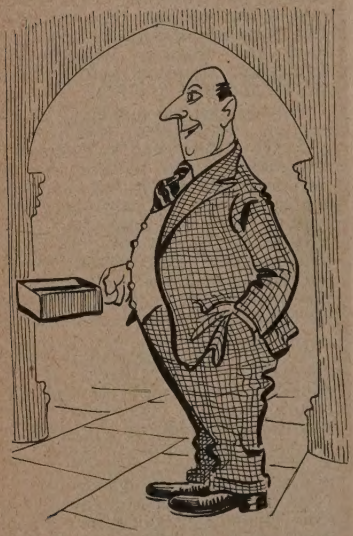
This scheme has a number of important advantages. Assuming a minister is appointed to Oldham in the near future it will not be necessary to invite any further ministers into the area, thus preventing additional calls upon the strained ministerial resources of the denomination. If the scheme is adopted it may well be possible to raise the stipends of ministers in the Manchester area to a minimum of £700.

At a meeting at the end of March delegates heard first reports of how churches had re-acted to the suggested links. Altrincham and Urmston, and Monton and Swinton are prepared to link. The minister at Cross Street is prepared to give limited pastoral oversight to Platt if Platt will still have main service from students at College. Oldham is prepared to link, so is Gorton, although Gorton considers it would be more logical to seek a closer link than the one suggested with Pendleton. Chorlton is prepared to link with Wythenshawe, but will not wish to do so before an agreement with its hardworking lay pastor has expired early in 1962. Hale and Sale will discuss linking when Mr. Gill leaves for Heywood and Chesham.

Postscript, from the April "Non-Subscribing Presbyterian:"

We congratulate All Souls' and York Street congregations on a record stipend of £1,920. This is the

largest ever contributed in the Non-Subscribing Church. It is the more remarkable in that there are no collectors. The original stipend of York Street in 1923 was £20 and that of All Souls' when the congregations were united, £115.



"Thank you, Sir. Did that come from the historical exhibition?"

NO STILETTOES IN CHURCH

The minister of the First Presbyterian Church, Belfast, asks for no stilettoes in Church or Hall — because of the damage caused to the floors by this type of heel on ladies shoes.

NEWS AND VIEWS

Overseas Churches

In February, CAPE TOWN, South Africa, said farewell to Mrs. Dorothy Ecclestone, who left for a new home away from the city. Mrs. Ecclestone, daughter of the second minister in Cape Town, the Rev. Ramsden Balmforth, was presented with a handsome suitably inscribed gold watch as "a token of appreciation for all she has done for the Church and the Unitarian movement she loves so well. The true measure of her work lies in the abundance of affection she leaves in the hearts of the congregation."

Home Churches

Editor of the "Young Unitarian," Neville A. Kenyon, and the paper's distribution secretary Betty Ashworth, were married at STAND on Easter Saturday. Both are members of Stand U.Y.P.L. branch, whose choir sang the 23rd Psalm during the service.

BANK STREET, Bolton, reached its Gift Day target and it is hoped soon to complete the plan to pave and grass the forecourt of the chapel. At the recent Sunday School A.G.M.

Northern S.S. Federation

UNITARIAN HOLIDAY HOMES

GREAT HUCKLOW, BUXTON
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No increase in charges. All three Homes will be ready to welcome you. Early booking desirable.

Mr. Wright Bowers resigned after seventeen years as chairman of the committee and Mr. Harry Chappell after nearly as long as Superintendent.

PENDLETON U.Y.P.L. presented "One of the Twelve" by Barbara Villard, a play concerning the life of Judas Iscariot, after the Palm Sunday Service. After serving for twenty-seven years, the organist, Miss Whitworth, has resigned. Miss Whitworth is widely known in the Manchester area, and has been a helping hand to many a budding organist. The new Pendleton organist is Mr. Tony Halstead, aged fifteen! Tony hopes to make a career as an organist.

A series of four Central Hall lectures were presented by the First Presbyterian Church, BELFAST, during March. The subjects were "The Bible To-day," "Essential Christianity and the Place of Jesus in Modern Life," "Miracles Past and Present," and "The World Predicament."

In April the monthly Forum at BUXTON began a series of meetings which aim at better understanding of neighbour churches. The first speaker was the vicar of the parish church.

The World Congress of Faiths is exploring the possibility of establishing a branch in Edinburgh—the first in Scotland—to further the work of fruitful contact between people of all faiths.

An Adventure Club for Bolton Unitarian Boys is now in being at Bolton. Behind the scheme is Mr. Hornby, Chairman of Bolton Unitarians United Action Committee. Under the auspices of the committee members have been helping old folk specially those house-bound. A television set and licence have already been provided to a legless man who lives alone and had no wireless. An appeal is now being made for radio and television sets for other people in a similar plight.

STOCKTON has decided to change from coke to oil heating. It is hoped to raise the cost of doing this by increasing the annual bazaar proceeds to £400. The eight page monthly calendar is printed and produced for the Church committee by the Stockton branch of the U.Y.P.L.

The Baxter pulpit at KIDDERMINSTER is to be renovated. While President of the General Assembly, Mr. A. L. Blake, started the necessary fund with a generous donation.

The flowers at PONTYPRIDD one Sunday in March came, via Interflora, from Mrs. Palkhivala, in Bombay.

The Spring Newsletter from the John Pounds Memorial Church, PORTSMOUTH, reports encouraging progress: "In less than five years since we re-opened we can claim a membership of 75, a Junior Church membership of 35 and an average congregation of over 50. Moreover, we have made a number of improvements such as the new organ, the pew cushions, the carpeting of the

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centre aisle and apse, and yet we have built up a balance of over £500."

A reporter from ILFORD writes: "It was a sight worth witnessing on Sunday, March 12, for the Church was well full of mothers or parents and children, and among them two octogenarians. To see the keenness of the kiddies and the splendid and efficient way they took their part in the service. Their reading was good, and a beautifully read prayer by one of the youngest of the congregation brought a lump to one's throat. After the service the congregation was invited into the hall to participate in the fourth anniversary cake."

The BLACKLEY Calendar for March and April said: "We are in danger of extinction." The "Manchester Evening News" reported this. Result —the largest congregation seen for some time! The Calendar also reports that a few of the new entrants to the Sunday School were not long ago the chief culprits in damaging the chapel property. "Evidently they have accepted the old saying: "If you can't fight 'em, join 'em.'"

Ministers of four denominations read passages from the passion narratives in the "New English Bible" at ALTRINCHAM on Maundy Thursday. With the Unitarian minister were a Baptist, a Congregationalist and a Presbyterian.

For three months DOB LANE, Manchester, Sunday School scholars have been working on the book of Genesis. At the end of the three month period a special service was held at which scholars summarised the book with readings.

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